

What Makes Streakers Run?

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

What is there about today's students that leads them to undress and romp in the nude across campuses, stages, basketball courts and other public places?

Those practitioners of "streaking" who've slowed down enough to be quoted say it's the fun and excitement. Cheap thrills.

"Those I've talked to say it's a thrill all right, but I wouldn't call it cheap," says Dr. Shelly Duval, a member of the University of Southern California psychology department.

"It would seem that streakers are violating a fairly strong set of norms for sure, and that can always be exciting if you get away with it. As far as I can see it's harmless," he said.

Dr. Zev Wanderer, a 41-year-old psychologist who directs the Center for Behavior Therapy in Beverly Hills, Calif., says part of the reason for the success of streaking is that it is self-assertive activity.

"In a generation where the way to be impactful is to be either a music star or very talented or a thief, an alternative for the student is to run around naked," he said. "It's a relatively easy way to gain fame and notoriety."

But Wanderer says educators should not just laugh it off.

"I think it's significant that this is taking place in colleges because by the time our kids reach that level they've had it with very regimented, con-

formist school systems," Wanderer said.

"It's a message to the schools that these kids ought to be in alternative open schools where kids can be themselves without having to run around naked."

Robert Ardrey, an evolutionary behaviorist from Rome, explains the fad as a fulfillment of one of man's basic needs.

"In today's affluent society and welfare state, the need for security has largely been satisfied, so boredom sets in," he told an audience at a junior college in Fort Worth, Tex. "Its opposite is stimulation."

William Boldeson, a philosophy professor at the University of Missouri, said streaking is just a form of the rites of spring and is as old as the Greeks.

"It's just innocent exuberance," Boldeson said. "One good blizzard and the whole thing will come to an end."

Whatever the reasons of the younger generation for their wild running in the buff, motives were simpler 56 years ago when retired California appeal court Justice Fred R. Pierce took a barebottomed dash near sorority row.

Pierce, now 74, said he was kicked out of Stanford University for his run in the nude.

And why did he do it? To win a \$5 bet with a fraternity brother.